

Voluntary - Public

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United Arab Emirates

Post: Dubai

Christmas Trees Report

Report Categories:

Product Brief

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Report Highlights:

Demand of live Christmas trees increased in the United Arab Emirates over the past few years.

General Information:

UAE Consumers Purchase Live Christmas Trees

In the past few years the demand for live Christmas trees has increased with the increasing number of expatriates settling in UAE. While many people leave the UAE during the Christmas season, it is estimated that 100,000 -150,000 homes are potential users of Christmas trees. Many people use artificial trees given the high cost of cut trees. However, florists and garden centers import small volumes of cut trees based on previous sales or specific pre-orders from clients.

According to local trade source, trees tend to come from Europe via the Netherlands and may include Scandinavian or Scottish trees. Trade data indicate that trees may also be coming from China, Egypt, Lebanon and Thailand along with small quantities from the United States. Local sources indicate that Nordman firs and the Fraser fir are most popular among premium buyers.

Prices of Christmas trees can vary considerably in Dubai. A three meter tree costs around \$190 in supermarkets, whereas the same size can be bought for 30 to 40 percent less in flower shops. The same applies to a two meter tree sold for \$135 and \$80 respectively. Prices are lower in other Emirates and in some public markets, but quality varies.

Trees are typically shipped in refrigerated containers by sea freight and stored at 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Sailing time from Europe is three weeks, longer from the United States. Trade sources indicate that no trees are currently sent by air freight because of the high cost. Local garden centers have expressed an interest in exploring the possibility of importing more trees from the United States. Growers interested in establishing contact with potential importers can contact ATO Dubai at atodubai@usda.gov.

Phytosanitary Requirements

The Ministry of Environment & Water is the government body regulating the trade of plants in UAE. Tree shipments should carry a phytosanitary certificate and should be imported without soil given restrictions from the Ministry to import natural soil.